

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 025963  
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY TEXT RECEIVED FROM WHITE HOUSE  
APPROVED BY NEA:ADUBS  
S/S-S:BSCHRAGE  
NSC - MR THORNTON

-----109630 010147Z /13

O 010106Z FEB 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 025963

EXDIS//FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PEPR, IN

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL LETTER DATED JANUARY 30 TO PRIME  
MINISTER DESAI

1. PLEASE TRANSMIT TO PRIME MINISTER DESAI THE FOLLOWING  
TEXT OF A PRESIDENTIAL LETTER DATED JANUARY 30, THE SIGNED  
ORIGINAL OF WHICH IS BEING POUCHED.

2. BEGIN TEXT: QTE DEAR PRIME MINISTER DESAI:

FIRST OF ALL, I WANT TO THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR MAGNIFICENT  
HOSPITALITY TO ROSALYNN AND ME AND FOR THE GENEROUS OUT-  
POURING OF FRIENDSHIP FOR THE UNITED STATES WHICH I EN-  
COUNTERED THROUGHOUT MY STAY IN INDIA. MY VISIT TO YOUR  
COUNTRY WAS AMONG THE MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE,  
AND I FEEL DEEPLY ENRICHED BY IT. I SHALL NEVER FORGET MY  
VISIT TO "CARTERPOORI", AND I THANK YOU PARTICULARLY FOR  
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INCLUDING IT IN MY PROGRAM.

I WAS ALSO VERY GLAD OF THE OPPORTUNITY YOU AND I HAD TO  
TALK TOGETHER AT LENGTH. I APPRECIATED YOUR FRANKNESS AND  
CANDOR IN OUR DISCUSSIONS OF THE NUCLEAR PROBLEM. (YOU  
WERE AS FRANK WITH ME AS I WAS WITH SECRETARY VANCE;)  
I NOW HAVE A MUCH BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR BELIEF THAT

THE BURDEN IS ON THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR BONA FIDES IN REDUCING THE RISK OF NUCLEAR WAR AND DESTRUCTION. AS YOU SAID IN YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 9, THERE IS A GREATER MEASURE OF COMMON GROUND BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES THAN IS GENERALLY REALIZED--OR EVEN THAN WE OURSELVES REALIZED BEFORE OUR MEETING. THE DECLARATION OF COMMON PRINCIPLES THAT WE JOINTLY SIGNED TESTIFIES TO OUR SHARED INTEREST IN PREVENTING FURTHER NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND IN BRINGING ABOUT THE ULTIMATE ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

YOUR STATEMENTS FOLLOWING YOUR MEETING WITH A DELEGATION OF UNITED STATES SENATORS AND AFTER PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN'S VISIT TO NEW DELHI WERE PARTICULARLY ENCOURAGING BECAUSE THEY SERVED TO REINFORCE PUBLICLY OUR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE CONTEXT IN WHICH INDIA WOULD BE WILLING TO MAKE A COMMITMENT TO ACCEPT FULL-SCOPE INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS.

YOUR FIRST CONCERN, A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY AMONG THE MAJOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES, IS SOMETHING THAT I AM SEEKING VIGOROUSLY AS AN ESSENTIAL STEP TOWARD THE ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. I SHARE PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN'S OPTIMISM THAT THE UNITED STATES, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE SOVIET UNION WILL BE ABLE TO AGREE ON THE  
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BASIC ELEMENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY LATER THIS YEAR. WITH THE CONSTRUCTIVE SUPPORT OF INDIA AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT, I HAVE EVERY HOPE THAT A TREATY WITH INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION CAN BE BROUGHT INTO EFFECT RAPIDLY.

YOUR OTHER CONCERNS, RELATING TO DETERMINED EFFORTS BY NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES TO AGREE ON LIMITATION AND PROGRESSIVE REDUCTION OF NUCLEAR STOCKPILES, WITH THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF ELIMINATING ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ARE KEY OBJECTIVES OF OUR CURRENT STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. THE PROSPECTS ARE GOOD FOR A SALT II AGREEMENT IN 1978 WHICH WILL PLACE IMPORTANT CONSTRAINTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TYPES OF STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND ON THE MODERNIZATION OF EXISTING ONES. THE AGREEMENT SHOULD--FOR THE FIRST TIME--RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN THE STOCKPILE OF THE WORLD'S NUCLEAR DELIVERY SYSTEMS. I WILL NOT, HOWEVER, BE SATISFIED WITH THESE LEVELS; I INTEND TO MOVE RAPIDLY TOWARD SALT III NEGOTIATIONS AIMED AT EVEN LOWER LEVELS OF STRATEGIC FORCES, AND EVEN TIGHTER CONSTRAINTS ON DEVELOPMENT IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

I SINCERELY HOPE THAT THIS PROGRESS ON A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN AND IN STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION ON THE PART OF THE MAJOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES WILL PROVIDE THE CONTEXT YOU ARE SEEKING FOR INDIA'S ACCEPTANCE OF COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS.

BECAUSE THE QUESTION OF SAFEGUARDS IS SO CENTRAL TO NON-PROLIFERATION OBJECTIVES AND IMPORTANT FOR INDO-US NUCLEAR COOPERATION, I WANT TO STATE OUR POSITION WITH THE UTMOST CLARITY.

AS I TOLD YOU IN NEW DELHI, LEGISLATION WILL SOON PASS THE US CONGRESS THAT WILL PLACE CONDITIONS ON US NUCLEAR  
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EXPORTS TO REDUCE THE RISKS OF PROLIFERATION. A KEY ELEMENT OF THIS PROSPECTIVE LEGISLATION IS A REQUIREMENT, AS A CONDITION FOR EXPORT LICENSING, THAT 18 MONTHS AFTER ENACTMENT, ALL OF THE NUCLEAR FACILITIES OF THE IMPORTING COUNTRY BE UNDER IAEA SAFEGUARDS. THIS PROVISION WOULD APPLY TO FUEL SHIPMENTS FOR THE TARAPUR REACTOR.

THE DRAFT VERSIONS OF THIS LEGISLATION PERMIT A PRESIDENTIAL WAIVER OF ITS RESTRICTIONS. MY ADMINISTRATION'S SUPPORT FOR THE LEGISLATION IN ALL OF ITS CURRENT MAJOR PROVISIONS IS SUCH, HOWEVER, THAT I SEE NO WAY THAT I WOULD BE ABLE TO WAIVE THEM. A WAIVER WOULD CALL INTO QUESTION MY DETERMINATION TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS IN A NON-DISCRIMINATORY FASHION.

ONE ELEMENT OF OUR POSITION WHICH HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO MISINTERPRETATION IS THE LINK BETWEEN FUEL SHIPMENTS AND THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY. WHILE I HOPE THAT INDIA WILL EVENTUALLY SEE ITS WAY CLEAR TO ADHERE TO THE NPT, I ALSO UNDERSTAND YOUR REASONS FOR NOT TAKING SUCH A STEP AT THIS TIME.

WE ARE, THEREFORE, PREPARED TO CONTINUE SHIPMENTS TO TARAPUR BEYOND THE 18-MONTH DEADLINE AND CARRY ON OTHER FORMS OF NUCLEAR COOPERATION IF INDIA PLACES AND MAINTAINS ALL OF ITS NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES UNDER INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS, EVEN WITHOUT ACCEPTANCE OF THE NPT. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL FACILITIES WOULD NEED TO BE SAFEGUARDED TO COVER ALL OF INDIA'S CURRENT ACTIVITIES. IN THE MEANTIME, AS I STATED IN NEW DELHI, I AM RECOMMENDING TO THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION THE SHIPMENT OF 7.6 TONS OF ENRICHED FUEL FOR TARAPUR.

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I WAS DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY THE SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED SO

ELOQUENTLY IN YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 9. WE HAVE, I BELIEVE, ESTABLISHED THE KIND OF RELATIONSHIP THAT WILL STAND US IN GOOD STEAD AS WE DEAL WITH THESE NUCLEAR QUESTIONS--WHICH ARE NOT SIMPLE ONES OF RIGHT AND WRONG, BUT THE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT KIND WHERE EACH SIDE RECOGNIZES THAT THE OTHER IS ALSO SUBSTANTIALLY RIGHT. I FEEL MUCH MORE CONFIDENT AFTER OUR MEETING THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO FIND A SOLUTION THAT WILL NOT ONLY BE MUTUALLY SUITABLE BUT WILL ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO THE BROAD INTERNATIONAL GOALS THAT OUR TWO COUNTRIES SHARE.

AS YOU POINT OUT, DIFFERENCES ON THE NUCLEAR QUESTION MUST NOT COME IN THE WAY OF THE OTHER IMPORTANT TASKS THAT LIE BEFORE US. THUS, EVEN IF MY OPTIMISM IS BELIED AND WE ARE NOT ABLE TO FIND A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE ARRANGEMENT ON NUCLEAR MATTERS AT THIS TIME, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON OTHER AREAS OF COOPERATION AND ENSURE THAT THE CONCLUSIONS WE REACHED IN NEW DELHI ARE PROMPTLY AND FULLY IMPLEMENTED.

I HOPE WE WILL CONTINUE CORRESPONDING UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN IN WASHINGTON LATER THIS YEAR. AMBASSADOR GOHEEN WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOUR OFFICE SOON SO THAT WE CAN SETTLE ON A MUTUALLY CONVENIENT TIME. I VERY MUCH LOOK FORWARD TO STRENGTHENING OUR FRIENDSHIP AND CONTINUING A DIALOGUE WHICH HOLDS PROMISE OF BENEFITTING THE UNITED STATES AND INDIA ALIKE. ROSALYNN JOINS ME IN SENDING OUR WARMEST GREETINGS; WE ARE PLANNING ALREADY HOW BEST TO RECIPRO-  
CATE YOUR UNPARALLELED HOSPITALITY. SINCERELY,  
JIMMY CARTER. (BEST WISHES; J.)

HIS EXCELLENCY  
MORARJI RANCHODBHAI DESAI

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PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI  
END TEXT VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PEPR, PPDC, IN, (CARTER, JIMMY), (DESAI, MORARJI)  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014